



STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE **2008-1010**

GOAL: ENHANCE ADVOCACY TO INFORM AND INFLUENCE POLICY MAKERS

- Enhance COSCAR's Effectiveness as an Advocate for Community Development
- Increase Involvement and Effectiveness of COSCAR Members in Advocacy
- Enhance/Expand Partnerships with National Organizations to Achieve COSCAR's Advocacy Goals

GOAL: STRENGTHEN THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Increase Engagement of Membership in Long-Term Policy Development
- Increase the Involvement of Membership in Short-Term Policy Development
- Strengthen Relationships and Coalitions with COSCAR partners

GOAL: INCREASE STATES' CAPACITY THROUGH TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Establish the COSCAR Training Academy
- Enhance and Expand Member Training While Training Academy is Developed (Short-Term)

GOAL: STRENGTHEN COSCAR'S ABILITY TO ACHIEVE ITS MISSION

- Ensure that the Organizational Structure Supports COSCAR's Mission and Goals
- Ensure COSCAR's Financial Strength
- Ensure that COSCAR is Appropriately Staffed
- Provide High Quality Service Delivery to Members



COSCAR'S MISSION AND GOALS 2008-2010

Since 1974, COSCAR has promoted the value and importance of state involvement in community development, economic development and affordable housing programs. During that time, COSCAR has positioned itself as the premier national association charged with advocating and enhancing the leadership role of states in community development. COSCAR's vision of community development encompasses community development in its broadest context, to include the full range of community development issues, affordable housing and homelessness, economic development, infrastructure, growth issues, technology and transportation in urban, suburban and rural communities. COSCAR supports a balanced focus on overarching themes and links across community development programs, as well as specific programs.

COSCAR will seek to support, facilitate and communicate this comprehensive approach of community development to the COSCAR membership as well as to elected and appointed officials and state and federal policy makers.

Vision:

COSCAR shall represent the leadership role of the states and shall be the premier voice of authority to Congress, federal and state agencies in advocating and promoting community development and affordable housing, eliminating homelessness and in providing technical assistance and increasing collaboration among state partners.

The mission of COSCAR is to:

- **Advocate** for the common community development goals of the states;
- **Develop** policies and recommendations on community development issues;
- **Keep** members informed on federal and state legislative and administrative developments that affect them;
- **Enhance** the capacity of states to deal effectively and comprehensively with community development issues;
- **Ensure** the availability of community development expertise to members;
- **Encourage** and assist states in the development and implementation of effective community development programs; and
- **Facilitate** the exchange of information about programs and achievements among states

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

GOAL: ENHANCE ADVOCACY TO INFORM AND INFLUENCE POLICY MAKERS

OBJECTIVE #1: Enhance COSCDA's Effectiveness as an Advocate for Community Development

Steps

- 1) Advocate for consistent and adequate resources and policies for key community development, housing and homelessness programs
- 2) Strengthen relationships with key members of Congress and the Administration and increase COSCDA's visibility; highlight the key role states play in community development
- 3) Conduct briefings for key Congressional staff on COSCDA's Legislative Priorities and state program effectiveness in general
- 4) Conduct meetings with Administration officials to advance COSCDA's policy positions
- 5) Encourage COSCDA members to form relationships with state associations and entitlement communities to partner in determining common policy issues

OBJECTIVE #2: Increase Involvement and Effectiveness of COSCDA Members in Advocacy

Steps

- 1) Build capacity of members to advocate at the state and federal level for COSCDA and state community development policy positions
- 2) Provide training to members on effective communication with Congress and the Administration
- 3) Inform members on key advocacy objectives
- 4) Increase members' participation in Congressional and HUD visits to advocate for COSCDA policy positions
- 5) Use Regional board members to encourage members' advocacy efforts
- 6) Strengthen relationships with Washington representatives of Governors

OBJECTIVE #3: Enhance/Expand Partnerships with National Organizations to Achieve COSCDA's Advocacy Goals

Steps

- 1) Establish coalitions with other national organizations to work on areas of mutual concern and to develop an effective advocacy strategy
- 2) Orchestrate joint efforts with key partners to further advocacy agenda
- 3) Strengthen relationships with National Governors Association to support COSCDA's advocacy goals

GOAL: STRENGTHEN THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

OBJECTIVE #1: Increase Engagement of Membership in Long-Term Policy Development

Steps

- 1) State agencies appoint specific voting individuals for Committee* membership
- 2) Utilize the committee co-chairs and regional representatives to communicate with committee members and improve responsiveness, if needed
- 3) Clarify the role of committee members and co-chairs
- 4) Conduct quarterly meetings/conference calls to expand time for fuller discussion of current policy issues
- 5) Communicate the results of committee meetings to all members on web site
- 6) Use the regional board members to conduct quick polling on policy issues
- 7) Continue use of member survey to identify policy issues
- 8) Review "list serve" issues to identify potential policy issues

OBJECTIVE # 2: Increase the Involvement of Membership in Short-Term Policy Development

Steps

- 1) Use Member Alerts to communicate policy proposals
- 2) Use time at regional meetings to discuss policy issues – Board and staff members present issues for consideration.

- 3) Use the new regional board members to conduct quick polling on policy issues

OBJECTIVE # 3: Strengthen Relationships and Coalitions with COSCDA Partners

Steps

- 1) Form coalitions with advocacy organizations to develop effective policy proposals
- 2) Improve communications with other advocacy organizations and potential sponsors via newsletters, participation in their conferences, invitation to COSCDA conferences, establishing relationships with key community development staff
- 3) Establish stronger alliance with NGA to work on areas of mutual concern
- 4) Establish stronger alliance with the Washington representatives of Governors

GOAL: INCREASE STATES' CAPACITY THROUGH TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

OBJECTIVE #1: Establish the COSCDA Training Academy

Steps

- 1) Assess COSCDA member training needs
- 2) Develop a training academy model and business plan
- 3) Develop funding mechanism for the academy
- 4) Launch the academy

OBJECTIVE #2: Enhance and Expand Member Training While Training Academy is under development (Short-Term)

Steps

- 1) Provide basic program managers training for community development, housing and homeless programs
- 2) Increase effectiveness and value of regional meetings as training opportunities

- 3) Explore joint training opportunities with COSCDA partners
- 4) Seek HUD funding for appropriate CPD training programs when appropriate
- 5) Advocate with HUD for improved quality of HUD training
- 6) Use state, regional and national meetings to showcase state best practices and innovations

GOAL: STRENGTHEN COSCDA'S ABILITY TO ACHIEVE ITS MISSION

OBJECTIVE #1: Ensure that the Organizational Structure Supports COSCDA's Mission and Goals

Steps

- 1) Review and revise COSCDA Committee process and structure to include elimination of the Programs Committee
- 2) Promote effectiveness of committees by encouraging maximum participation and develop COSCDA leadership through committee leadership tasks/responsibilities
- 3) Ensure that regional meetings include sessions on all core programs
- 4) Further define the selection process and role for regional representatives

OBJECTIVE #2: Ensure COSCDA's Financial Strength

Steps

- 1) Form a resource subcommittee of the board chaired by the treasurer
- 2) Develop a plan for financial stability coordinated with the training academy
- 3) Increase marketing efforts to attract non-member state agencies, associate and corporate members

OBJECTIVE #3: Ensure that COSCDA is Appropriately Staffed

Steps

- 1) Evaluate current staffing in context of strategic plan

- 2) Attract and retain quality staff
- 3) Develop appropriate plan for staff compensation and benefits
- 4) Provide opportunities for staff development and training

OBJECTIVE #4: Provide High Quality Service Delivery to Members

Steps

- 1) Periodically assess member satisfaction
- 2) Tailor conference agendas to address members' needs
- 3) Provide opportunities to highlight effective and innovative programs

COSFDA's strategic planning process is ongoing. Board, Committees and staff will implement yearly action plans to accomplish the objectives identified under each goal. COSFDA members will be kept abreast as activities are implemented and progress made toward achievement of these goals. In addition, the COSFDA Board will review the plan biennially.